IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims to have the status and content indicated in the following listing of claims, wherein any cancellation of claims is made *without prejudice*.

1. (Currently amended) A method ~~for~~ of preventing crystallization of recombinant or synthetic gelatin in a vaccine composition comprising recombinant or synthetic gelatin as a stabiliser, said method comprising the steps of:

reducing the water content of the vaccine composition to be below 2 weight percent; and

maintaining the water content below 2 weight percent for at least 2 years.

2. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 in which the recombinant gelatin is homodisperse.

3. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 in which the molecular weight of the recombinant gelatin is in a range selected from the group consisting of between 2.5 and 50 kD, between 2.5 and 30 kD, and between 2.5 and 15 kD.

4. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 in which the molecular weight of the recombinant gelatin is in a range selected from the group consisting of between 5 and 10 kD, and between 6 and 8 kD.

5. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein any two of the amino acid sequences of the peptides constituting said recombinant or synthetic gelatin when optimally aligned by the program GAP or BESTFIT using default parameters, share at least 80 percent sequence identity.

6. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 in which the lifetime is the time from production to the moment of use of the composition.

7. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the lifetime is the period of storage of the composition.

8. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein the water content is maintained below 2 weight percent to prevent crystallization of the recombinant or synthetic gelatin for at least 7 years.

9. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein maintaining the water content below 2 weight percent during the lifetime of the vaccine composition comprises providing the composition in a sufficiently moisture-tight container.

10. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1 wherein maintaining the water content below 2 weight percent during the lifetime of the vaccine composition comprises providing the composition in a sufficiently air-tight container.

11. (Withdrawn - previously presented) A vaccine composition comprising recombinant gelatin as a stabiliser, wherein said composition has a water content of less than 2 weight percent and is stored to maintain the water content of the vaccine composition below 2 weight percent for at least 2 years.

12. (Withdrawn) A vaccine composition according to claim 11 which is at least 3 months old.

13-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Withdrawn) A vaccine composition according to claim 11, wherein any two of the amino acid sequences of the peptides constituting said recombinant or synthetic gelatin when optimally aligned by the program GAP or BESTFIT using default parameters, share at least 80 percent sequence identity.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Withdrawn) A pharmaceutical composition comprising at least one therapeutic protein and further comprising recombinant or synthetic gelatin as a stabiliser, wherein said composition has a water content of less than 2 weight percent and is stored to maintain the water content of the vaccine composition below 2 weight percent for at least 2 years.

18. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 2 in which the molecular weight of the recombinant gelatin is in a range selected from the group consisting of between 2.5 and 50 kD, between 2.5 and 30 kD, and between 2.5 and 15 kD.

19. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 2 in which the molecular weight of the recombinant gelatin is in a range selected from the group consisting of between 5 and 10 kD, between 6 and 8 kD.

20. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 2, wherein any two of the amino acid sequences of the peptides constituting said recombinant or synthetic gelatin when optimally aligned by the program GAP or BESTFIT using default parameters, share at least 80 percent sequence identity.

21. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the reducing step comprises freeze drying the vaccine composition and keeping the

temperature below a calculated glass transition temperature of the vaccine composition during freeze drying.

22. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the maintaining step comprises sealing the vaccine composition in an air- and moisture-tight container under an oxygen-free gas or under vacuum.

23-25. (Canceled)

26. (new) The method according to claim 1 wherein the water content of the vaccine composition is reduced to be between 1 weight percent and 2 weight percent.